FAQ

Q: Principales nouveautés de l’appel Ambizione 2025 du FNS?:
R:

- **Équipe et budget du projet** : Le FNS a supprimé la possibilité d'engager des doctorant.es et postdoctorant.es au sein d’un projet *Ambizione*. En conséquence, le montant maximal du fonds de projet a été réduit à CHF 250'000 pour une durée de projet de 4 ans. Les fonds de projet peuvent être utilisés pour engager du personnel de soutien (p. ex. technicien.nes ou assistant.es scientifiques). Ainsi, le soutien fourni dans ce cadre par l’institution de recherche au projet du requérant doit également se limiter à du personnel de soutien.

- **Resoumission d’une requête** : Afin de garantir un traitement équitable, il n’est plus exigé que les chercheur.es mentionnent de manière explicite les modifications apportées à la requête initiale. Les projets resoumis seront désormais évalués de la même manière que les premières soumissions. Toutefois, il reste attendu que les requérant.es tiennent compte des motifs de rejet et adaptent leur projet en conséquence.

Q:
Situation:
Je suis actuellement dans ma 3ème année de thèse en science de la vie et il me reste encore 2 ans de contrat. Je commence donc à m'intéresser aux possibilités de mobilités post-doctorales. Ma compagne étant entrepreneuse en Suisse, il sera difficile pour elle de quitter la suisse pour m'accompagner. Pour cette raison je me pose plusieurs questions concernant les durées de mobilités et les potentiels soutiens à la famille.

1. **General:**
    a. Est-ce possible/réaliste d'obtenir des financements FNS (type Ambizione), et donc une carrière académique en suisse, sans avoir eut une expérience à l'étranger ? Et est-ce que dans ce contexte, un mobi-doc de 6 mois peut être considéré comme une expérience suffisante ?

- D'abord, pour soumettre une candidature Ambizione, il faut "*justifier d’une activité de recherche d’au moins une année (avec un taux d’occupation moyen d’au minimum 80 %) depuis l’obtention du doctorat (la dat de l’examen ou de soutenance du doctorat est déterminante) ou d’une qualification équivalente*". (Conditions personnelles générales du règlement Ambizione : article 5, page 3).

- Oui, il est possible de soumettre une candidature Ambizione sans séjour à l'étranger, mais prévoyant une mobilité de 12 mois dans le cadre du projet (en Suisse ou à l'étranger) et indiquant toute autre forme de mobilité si effectuée. De plus, une déclaration de mobilité est obligatoire (en remplissant un formulaire dedié) qui comprend en tout 5 dimensions de la mobilité que vous pouvez couvrir partiellement. La mobilité purement physique n'est plus obligatoire pour des raisons de durabilité et de qualité. Je vous ajoute ici la capture de l'article 9 du règlement, détaillant la question de la mobilité pour Ambizione :

Article 9 Mobilité

[1] La mobilité sert à affûter le profil scientifique et à optimiser la position pour une carrière scientifique ou académique.

[2] La mobilité est un critère d'évaluation dans les subsides Ambizione et elle doit être mentionnée dans les documents de la requête par le biais d'une prise de position. Le FNS tient compte de diverses formes de mobilité dans l'évaluation du parcours professionnel (mobilité rétrospective) et dans les mesures planifiées au cours du subside (mobilité prospective).

[3] Si, après l'obtention du doctorat, de la qualification équivalente ou du diplôme médical, il n'y a pas eu de séjour de recherche de douze mois dans une institution différente de celle où s'est déroulé le doctorat, la qualification équivalente ou le diplôme médical, il faut alors mentionner de quelle manière une mobilité de qualité équivalente pourra être atteinte dans le cadre du subside Ambizione.

[4] Conformément à l'alinéa 3, la mobilité équivalente dans le cadre d'un subside Ambizione peut prendre les formes suivantes :

a. séjour au sein d'une institution de recherche non commerciale (institution hôte) en Suisse ou à l'étranger ;

b. séjour au sein d'une institution orientée vers la pratique en Suisse ou à l'étranger (industrie, administration, etc. ; mobilité intersectorielle) ;

c. autres formes de mobilité telles que de brefs séjours ou des collaborations internationales.

[5] D'une durée totale maximale de douze mois, les séjours au sens de l'alinéa 4, lettres a et b, peuvent être répartis entre plusieurs institutions et sur différentes périodes. Si la durée d'un subside Ambizione est inférieure à quatre ans, la durée maximale des séjours est réduite proportionnellement.

[6] Il est possible de faire une demande de séjour au moment de la soumission de la requête ou en cours de subside dans les limites du budget accepté.

[7] Toute demande de séjour doit être accompagnée d'une lettre d'invitation de l'institution hôte concernée, confirmant le respect des conditions énoncées à l'article 8, alinéa 2, lettres a et b pour la durée du séjour.

La mobilité du candidat sera évaluée sur la base de la déclaration fournie. La mobilité réalisée à la fin de la bourse sera évaluée au regard de l'objectif du programme de financement concerné. La déclaration sera évaluée en fonction du plan de recherche, du CV et du choix de l'institution de recherche. (Ambizione Guidelines, p.9). (SR, 25 aout 2025).

SNSF Information event for the Ambizione call for proposals : 16.08.2024

Eligibility

Question : "I am a postdoc 3 years past my PhD defense in November 2025, and would like to apply for SNF funding in the upcoming academic year, considering Ambizione and SNF Starting Grant. Is it possible to apply to both Ambizione and SNF Starting Grant in parallel? Asking because Ambizione is due in November and Starting Grant only later in 2026.
But in the unlikely event that I get an Ambizione, I would no longerbe eligible for a Starting Grant when it ends.

Answer (2 July 2025): Parallel submissions of both types of career grant with overlapping SNSF funding periods are not permitted. You will need to choose the funding instrument that best suits your career stage and short-term goals. I would advise you to start with Ambizione to strengthen your scientific independence.

In fact, SNSF stated the following :
"*Ambizione grantees may apply for an SNSF Starting Grant 12 months after starting their Ambizione grant at the earliest*". **Page 5, Call_Document_SNSF_StG_2025.**

"*2.4 Parallel submissions*
Note that an Ambizione application may only be submitted for a duration of support for which no other project grants (as applicant or co-applicant), Sinergia grants, SPIRIT grants or programmes of the SNSF have been requested, approved or are ongoing. For career funding schemes, parallel applications may only be submitted for Postdoc.Mobility return grant (see article 13 of the Ambizione Regulations)". **Page 3, Ambizione_guidelines.**

Question similaire "soumission parallèle" :

La date limite pour le dépôt des candidatures Ambizione est fixée au 4 novembre 2025, tandis que celle pour les Starting Grants est au 5 mai 2026. Toutefois, les résultats d'Ambizione 2025 ne seront communiqués qu'après la date limite des Starting Grants.

Est-il donc possible de soumettre une candidature aux deux appels en parallèle, même si, à ce stade, nous ne saurons pas encore si l'un des deux a été retenu ?

Réponse

Si vous soumettez une requête SNS StG au 5 mai 2026 alors que l'Ambizione est encore sous évaluation, cela constitue une soumission parallèle non autorisée si les périodes de financement des deux subsides devaient se chevaucher (ce qui serait potentiellement le cas, car les bourses Ambizione sont octroyées pour un maximum de quatre ans et commencent au plus tôt le 1er septembre 2026, tandis que les StG 2026 commencent au plus tôt le 1er mai 2027).

En effet, le règlement du FNS indique comme suit :

- Note that an **Ambizione** application may only be submitted **for a duration** of support **for which no other project grants** (as applicant or co-applicant)... or programmes of the SNSF have been **requested**, approved or are ongoing. *(Ambizione call Document 2025, p.3)*

- ***Parallel submissions*** *to other SNSF instruments* ***with overlapping funding periods*** *to the requested SNSF Starting Grant* ***are not permitted****.*
- Ambizione grantees may apply for an SNSF Starting Grant 12 months after starting their Ambizione grant at the earliest.
(StG call Document 2026, p.1&5).

Question: Hello, can research assistants be employed instead of PhDs within the project?

Answer: Yes, it is possible to hire other personnel than PhD students via an Ambizione Grant

Question: Are candidates considered eligible if they have completed their PhD and postdoctoral work outside the Swiss university system and have never been part of the Swiss academic system before?

Answer: Yes, if they fulfil all other participation requirements, they are eligible. There is no requirements in terms of nationality or residence permit.

Question: Does the fact that SNF receive very few application for 'Ambizione research project only (no salary') increases the success chance for this 2nd option? Are the 2 options evaluated separately?

Answer: No, they are evaluated together with the other Ambizione proposals and are treated the same way.

Question: Can the Spark grant overlap with the Ambizione grant? Or should I let the Ambizione grant start after the enddate of the Spark?

Answer: Yes, it is possible that a Spark grant overlaps with an Ambizione funding period.

Question: After having submitted an Ambizione application, is it correct that you can not apply to SNF project funding nor NCCR scheme as a PI? For how long are you prevented to do so?

Answer: Yes, indeed. If you have submitted an Ambizione proposal, you cannot apply for the same duration of support for an SNSF project funding or NCCR in the role of an applicant or further applicant. This is only possible again for a funding duration, which would start after the end of your Ambizione grant.

CV

Question: Can major output be justified by something else than publications, eg. grants, conferences organisation, invited talks, what is acceptable?

Answer: Yes you can opt to put whatever you like as major scientific achievement as long as you follow the formal regulations (like max. number of citation, etc).

Collaboration

Question: Can we have collaborations with other institutions ? For example, can we say that some data will be provided from another center with which we collaborate?

Answer: Yes, that is possible.

Research plan

Question: About the research plan, can we use figures/diagrams in the research plan? Like showing the work packages and experimental plan details? This’s not clarified in the guideline. The figures will be counted into the 15 page limit? but will not be counted into 60000 characters, is this right? Thanks.

Answer: Yes, you can include as many figures / diagrams / tables as you wish, as long as your research plan is not longer than 15 pages and does not include more than 60'000 characters.

Salary

Question: For the project grant, can the salary also be covered by university funding?

Answer: Yes, this is possible. Important is that your position/salary is covered for the whole duration of the potential Ambizione grant.

Question: In the Ambizione regulations it is mentioned that "The average gross salary will be around CHF 120'000 per annum". However, after having asked to 4-5 different universities in Switzerland only one really approaches that average salary. Where is this 120k figure coming from? Do universities need to comply with it to some extent? Thanks.

Answer: This is an approximate figure we suggest in view of our experience, bot not all universities pay the same salaries. In case you are invited for phase 2 of the evaluation, we will verify your actual salary with the planned research institution based on your experience and their salary brackets for Ambizione grantees.

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Answer: It is expected that the research institution contributes a commensurate share of the funding of research expenses (e.g. material, equipment, personnel, travel, etc.) and access rights to infrastructures, equipment, and other services as necessary for conducting the research, but there is no specific prescription on how this has to be done. This is an approximate figure we suggest in view of our experience, bot not all universities pay the same salaries. In case you are invited for phase 2 of the evaluation, we will verify your actual salary with the planned research institution based on your experience and their salary brackets for Ambizione grantees.

Budget

Question: Can you add a General Abonnment (GA) to the budget if you intend to carry out research in different parts of Switzerland and cannot specify all the travels you will have to take?

Answer: In principle this is not possible.

Question: Must the planned publications during the Ambizione Project be open access? Should the publication costs be part of the planned budget?

Answer: Yes, this is a requirement for SNSF funded projects. The publication costs can however not be applied for via the Ambizione budget itself, but can be requested later on during the ongoing grant via a separate funding possibility. cf. Home EN - Open Access (snf.ch)

Hosting institution fund

Question: Is it true that the hosting institution must fund 20% of the expenses? Is it possible for the host institution not to contribute with any funding?

Answer: It is expected that the research institution contributes a commensurate share of the funding of research expenses (e.g. material, equipment, personnel, travel, etc.) and access rights to infrastructures, equipment, and other services as necessary for conducting the research, but there is no specific prescription on how this has to be done.

Evaluation

Question: Are people rated higher in the evaluation process if they request to supervise PhD candidate and rated lower if they decide not to?

Answer It does not have an influence on the assessment of the application.

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Question: Is it possible for two researchers in the same department of an institute to get the Ambizione grant during the same application period? Or does SNF only give one grant to a department in any given year?

Answer: If both proposals are evaluated positively, it is possible. There are no restrictions in terms of how many ambizione grants can be submitted per host institution.

Question: If you have already submitted your proposal once (say 2024), do you have to resubmit in the very next year if it’s rejected or can you apply in 2 years (e.g. in 2026)

Answer: You can resubmit in whichever year you like, as long as you still fulfill all eligibility criteria. Also as a reminder, it is only possible to apply two times to Ambizione

Question: Is it a problem if an applicant also has aspirations for a non-academic career after the Ambizione? Will this been seen in a negative way?

Answer: Yes that is possible. The aim after the grant is that applicants will be ready for a related extra-academic or academic career.

Resubmission

Question: If a proposal is rejected after the first step, does it have to be resubmitted exclusively to the next call, or can it be resubmitted again afterwards?

Answer: You can resubmit in whichever year you like, as long as you still fulfill all eligibility criteria. Also as a reminder, it is only possible to apply two times to Ambizione.

Révision #7
Créé 2024-08-17 21:55:44 UTC par Rolande Christelle Tardy
Mis à jour 2025-10-16 11:15:07 UTC par Rolande Christelle Tardy